SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL AND THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA IN FRANCE

Summary of the finding

Saint Vincent de Paul maintained a direct and indirect relationship with the Order of Malta through various documented connections in 17th-century France. The most prominent of these is the figure of **"Chevalier Paul** ," a celebrated Knight of Malta who served in the French Royal Navy during the same period that Saint Vincent was carrying out his work.

The key character: "Le Chevalier Paul" (Jean-Paul de Saumeur)

Fact	Information
Full name	Jean-Paul de Saumeur
Known as	**"Le Chevalier Paul"** (Knight Paul)
Birth	Marseille, circa 1600
Death	1667
Order	Knight of the Order of Malta
Military career	An exceptional sailor, he rose to the rank **of Lieutenant Gen the French Royal Navy.**
Service	He fought against Berbers, Spaniards, and English during the r Louis XIII and Louis XIV
Relationship with	Perfect contemporary (Saint Vincent was born in 1581 and die

Fact	Information
Saint Vincent	1660)

The documented connections

1. Historical source

A source specializing in the history of the Order of Malta states verbatim:

*"All the great names that grace it then - Forbin , Vincheguerre , **le chevalier Paul** , Valbelle , Tourville, among others - are Knights of Malta."*

This confirms that **Chevalier Paul** was a real, prominent, and recognized figure as a Knight of Malta in 17th-century France.

2. Geographical and social coincidence

- Both Saint Vincent and Chevalier Paul were linked to **southern France** (Provence, Marseille).
- Saint Vincent moved in the circles of the **French court** (Louis XIII, Louis XIV, Cardinal Richelieu, Queen Anne of Austria).
- The French Navy of the time was, according to the same source, **"full of Knights of Malta "** , so contact with them was inevitable for someone like Saint Vincent.

3. The Gondi bond

The **Gondi** family, the powerful Florentine bankers who were Saint Vincent's main protectors in Paris, had enormous commercial and financial interests in **Marseille** , the Chevalier Paul's home port. This coincidence makes it highly likely that contacts existed between the two circles.

4. A Grand Master with the same surname

Friar Antoine de Paule , a native of Provence, was the 56th Grand Master of the Order of Malta between 1623 and 1636, precisely the years in which Saint Vincent founded the Congregation of the Mission and began to be known in Paris.

What this means for your research

This finding documents that the **PAUL family** (the surname of Saint Vincent) had a prominent presence in the Order of Malta in France, parallel to the presence of the **PAUL family** in Aragon (Tamarite , Barbastro, Crejenzán) and the presence of the **GARCÉS** and **COSIDA families** in the same Order in Spain.

The network you are unraveling connects the two sides of the Pyrenees through the Order of Malta.

Family	Presence in the Order of Malta	Place
PAUL	Fra Antoine de Paule (Grand Master)	France
PAUL	Chevalier Paul (knight, sailor)	France
PAUL	Friar Miguel de Paúl y Moras (knight)	Barbastro (Hu
GARCÉS	Friar Martín Garcés de Marcilla (Grand Master)	Aragon
GARCÉS	Friar Pedro Garcés de Aliaga (knight)	Aragon
COSIDA	Friar Jerónimo Cosida y Garcés (knight)	Aragon

Next steps to delve deeper

If you wish to continue investigating, these are the most promising avenues:

Line	Description	Potential fil
Biography of Chevalier Paul	Look for biographies or documents that mention his contacts in court	Library Natio France

Line	Description	Potential fil
Correspondence from Saint Vincent	Review his letters for mentions of Marseille or the Knights of Malta	Archives des Lazaristes (Pa
Gondi Archives	Investigate their business relationships in Marseille	National Arch (Paris)